Urban and Community Forestry

COMMUNITY FORESTRY

STANDARD TREE PLANTING DETAIL

The hole:
Excavate a pit which is at least twice the diameter of the rootball and the same depth — no deeper. Handle the tree by the rootball, not the trunk. **Be sure the rootball or container soil rests on solid ground.** For best root development, enlarge the planting area by removing existing turf, then spading or tilling soil in a wide ring.

Carefully cut twine wrapped around the stem at the top of the' rootball. Remove burlap from the top of the rootball to prevent wicking of moisture from the soil. Remove completely any plastic burlap or container.

Backfill soil:
Backfill the pit with chopped excavated soil. Use local topsoil for backfill if excavated soil is of poor quality. Discard rocks and debris.

Water:
Saturate the entire backfilled soil with water. Add more soil if needed to compensate for settling.

Mulch:
Cover smoothed soil with 3 inches of wood or bark chips. Leave a small gap near the trunk. Keep mulch weeded. Replace as needed.

Pruning:
Remove **only** broken or badly deformed branches. Begin a regular pruning program the second or third year after planting.

The following procedures are optional:
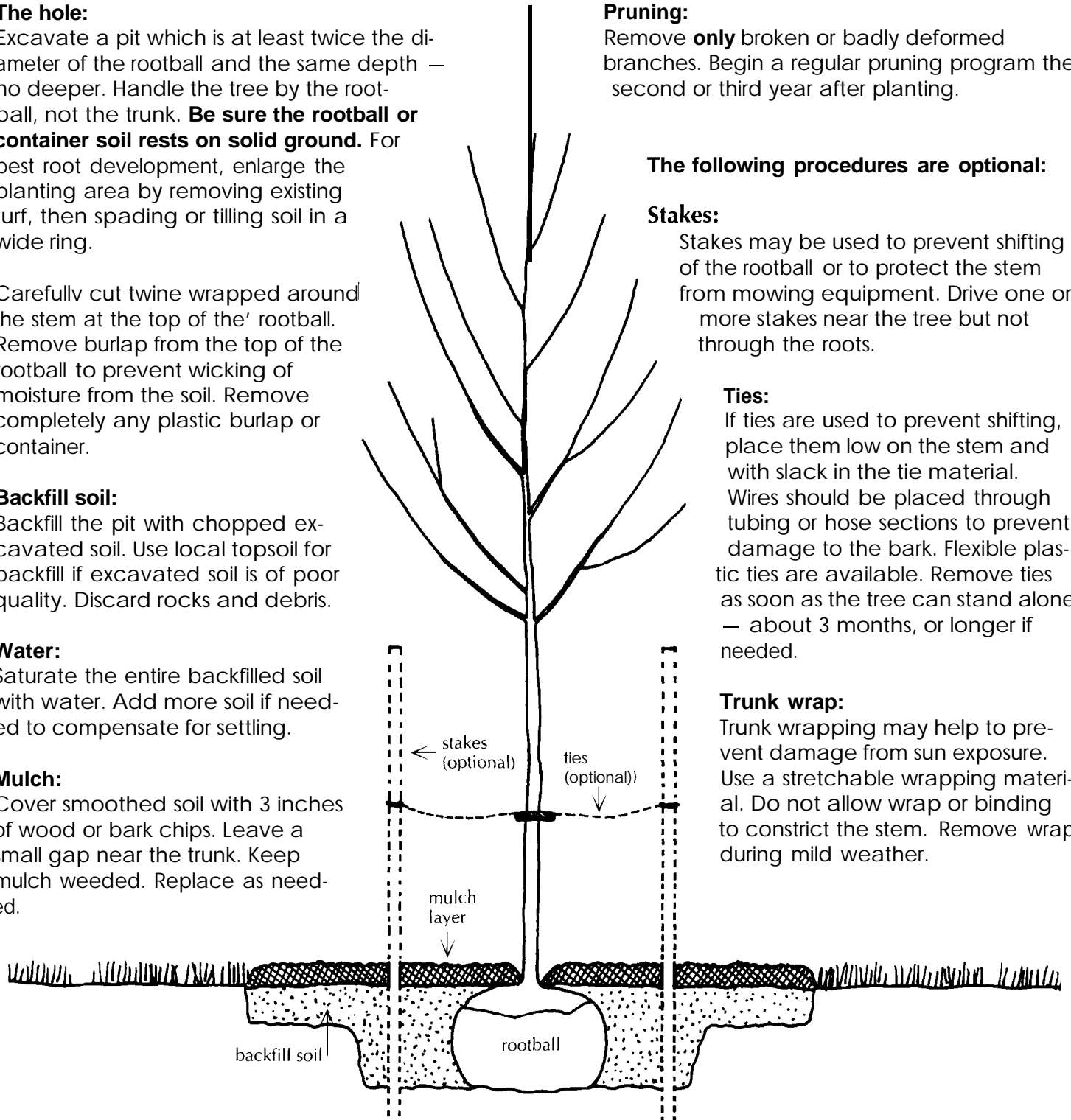
Stakes:
Stakes may be used to prevent shifting of the rootball or to protect the stem from mowing equipment. Drive one or more stakes near the tree but not through the roots.

Ties:
If ties are used to prevent shifting, place them low on the stem and with slack in the tie material. Wires should be placed through tubing or hose sections to prevent damage to the bark. Flexible plastic ties are available. Remove ties as soon as the tree can stand alone — about 3 months, or longer if needed.

Trunk wrap:
Trunk wrapping may help to prevent damage from sun exposure. Use a stretchable wrapping material. Do not allow wrap or binding to constrict the stem. Remove wrap during mild weather.

stakes (optional)

ties (optional))

mulch layer

backfill soil

rootball

These procedures may be used for planting in relatively uncompacted soils, or where water will percolate through the topsoil layer.

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